WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED AND UNSTARRED QUESTIONS SET FOR THE 29TH JULY, 2002.

Code of Conduct for the Media

†*201. DR. AKHILESH DAS:

SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU):

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any initiative regarding the need for a code of conduct for the media through the Press Council of India or otherwise; and

(b) if so, the details of the steps so far taken and the progress made in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) The Press Council of India, a self regulatory body for Press, has been established for the purposes of preserving the freedom of the Press and maintaining and improving the standards of newspapers and news agencies, Section 13(2)(b) of the Press Council Act, 1978 enjoins upon the press Council to bulild up a Code of Conduct for newspapers, news agencies and journalists in accordance with high professional standards. The Press Council has accordingly brought out a publication 'Norms of Journalistic Conduct' which covers principles and ethics with regard to journalism and also guidelines on reporting the specific issues of public and national importance.

The Prasar Bharati, an autonomous organisation, adheres to explicit Broadcast and Advertising Codes. Satellite channels transmitting programmes through cable networks, are required to adhere to the Programme and Advertising Codes prescribed under the provisions of the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995.

Autonomous District Councils

*202. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Autonomous District councils (ADCs) existing in the country for development of Scheduled Tribes and their number in the North Eastern States;

†The sitting of the Rajya Sabha on Monday, the 29th July, 2002 was adjourned as a mark of respect to the memory of Shri Krishan Kant, Vice-President of India and Chairman, Rajya Sabha. Answers to Questions put down in the lists for that day were laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday, 30th July, 2002.